

# **RUTGERS SUSPENDS FOOTBALL COACH FOR ACADEMIC INTRUSIONS**

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*Rutgers has suspended football coach Kyle Flood for three games after he contacted a faculty member over a player's status. (Credit: AP)*

Law360, Jersey City (September 16, 2015, 6:29 PM ET) -- Rutgers University suspended its head football coach for three games and fined him \$50,000 after an investigation led by a Saiber LLC managing partner found he inappropriately communicated with a professor concerning the academic standing of one of his players.

The penalty, handed down Wednesday by Rutgers President Robert Barchi, was based on a 21-page report from William F. Maderer, managing member of Saiber, a New Jersey-based law firm. The report, a lightly redacted version of which was made public Wednesday, said that coach Kyle Flood broke Rutgers rules prohibiting coaches from contacting faculty members regarding student-athletes' academic standing. The identity of the player was not disclosed.

"Based on what we know now, it is clear to me that Coach Flood had inappropriate communications with the faculty member in violation of an established policy," Barchi said in a statement Wednesday.

“Coach Flood is specifically tasked with knowing both NCAA and our institutional policies regarding these issues,” Barchi added. “Simply, Coach Flood has no excuse for not knowing the rule and following it.”

According to the report, Flood “used his personal email” to contact a professor and the duo later had a meeting regarding the player’s academic standing. With Flood’s urging, the professor agreed to allow the student-athlete to submit another paper for review “as partial satisfaction” for the requirements of a course that had already been completed, the report said.

The paper, for which Flood provided some “grammatical and minor editorial suggestions,” was submitted but ultimately not graded, the report said, leaving the academic status of the student and his final course grade unchanged.

According to Barchi, it is possible that Flood’s actions constituted violations of NCAA policy as well, and the school is looking into whether the coach violated any NCAA bylaws. Rutgers has alerted the NCAA, with Barchi saying the two organizations will work together “on the next steps.”

A representative for the NCAA did not immediately respond to a request for comment Wednesday.

The team, known as the Scarlet Knights, is 1-1 this season. The Knights will not have Flood running the show for their upcoming games against Penn State, Kansas and Michigan State.

“I believe that the discipline is severe and justified for [Flood’s] failure to follow policy,” Barchi said, adding that the coach “accepted responsibility for his actions” in a meeting between the two.

“We have high expectations of every member of our community and no one is free from responsibility,” Barchi said. “We must use this opportunity to grow, to do more and to do better. And we will.”

Representatives for Flood could not immediately be reached for comment.

--Editing by Aaron Pelc.